

# King County School Health

## Brought to you by Public Health -- Seattle & King County

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Punxsutawney Phil did not see his shadow. El Nino predictions abound for mild weather on the near horizon. Spring is on its way and we're springing into the last half of the school year!

Mainstays of Spring semester often include standardized testing and post-graduation planning. For many students, anxiety comes with these. In this edition, we will cover some tips to help providers support students who may struggle this time of year.

## News

### Good News

### Supporting Your Practice with Academic and Clinical Data

Our Seattle School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs) will receive regular academic data for their patients now!

As many of you know, in the 2015-2016 school year mental health providers at SBHCs in Seattle Public Schools (SPS) received Institutional Partner designation. With this designation, SPS recognizes mental health providers as "extensions" of the District and provides them access to their clients' academic data to better tailor interventions and services for students.

In February after many months of planning and negotiations, Public Health--Seattle & King County (PHSKC) began receiving this data and securely sharing it with clinics. Clinics will now receive reports every 1-2 weeks from PHSKC that provide academic information about mental health patients (including IEP status, absence/tardy counts, home language, and whether the student is passing their core courses). PHSKC will provide similar data for medical users with signed FERPA releases on record. Clinic Coordinators will receive the reports from PHSKC and distribute them to the appropriate staff members based on SPS's data sharing guidelines (shared previously with the Clinic Coordinators).

Additional benefits of Institutional Partner designation for mental health providers include supplemental access to their clients' data through Source, SPS's student academic database. Lastly, student data will also be available in the mental health care management registry (MHITS) for participating mental health providers.



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Our [SBHC website](#) is new and improved

[Newsletter archive](#)



### Tips for Crisis Communication

Check out this blog from SBHA about [handling crisis communication](#) in SBHCs.



### Coverage on Nurse Staffing

ParentMap recently highlighted the topic of [school nurse staffing levels](#) in Western Washington. Some of our own SPS colleagues

With this process finally rolling out, we are excited to hear how this goes for you. Please let us know your experiences (challenges, successes, questions, etc.) with using academic data to support your work. During Jessica Knaster Wasse's maternity leave, you may contact Kaetlin Miller at [kaetlin.miller@kingcounty.gov](mailto:kaetlin.miller@kingcounty.gov) about these efforts.

### *In the Spotlight*

#### **Heather Phillips, Mental Health Therapist at Madrona SBHC (Odessa Brown Children's Clinic)**



##### **What path led you to school health work?**

I have worked on and off in health clinics since I was in high school. I pursued a masters degree in social work because I wanted to do work that promoted social justice and equality. Working in a school-based health clinic has allowed me to do work that draws from my experiences and interests and grow as a mental health provider.

##### **What do you like best about your job?**

I like that I work in a position that really allows me to meet students and families where they are at. Being in a school setting I am able to interact and connect with students in a different way that feels very meaningful and impactful to me. The best part is of course the students themselves.

##### **What is a big challenge?**

For me the biggest challenge is dealing with systems that are difficult and are not always functioning in a way that is positive for students. I gain energy from working with many amazing individuals who work really hard to support students, but the systems themselves can be challenging.

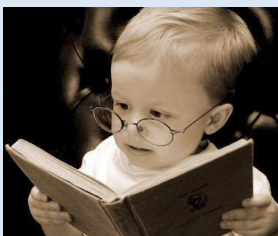
##### **What is something unusual that most people don't know about you?**

People may know that I really enjoy cooking, but something new is that I am now able to share that joy with my 3 year old son. He looks pretty cute in a chef hat, and his specialties are pizza and chocolate chip cookies.

*Each month we like to highlight the work of individuals and teams in our school-based health system. To suggest an individual or team to be highlighted in a future newsletter, email [kaetlin.miller@kingcounty.gov](mailto:kaetlin.miller@kingcounty.gov).*

### *Journal Club*

#### **Attention-Deficit: The Interplay Between Behavioral Therapy and Medication**



*It's a good one.*

What happens when you treat attention-deficit with behavioral therapy first? Recent studies show sequences of therapies--both behavioral and medical--can make a difference for children. What is your experience? How does this impact your practice?

Carey, B. (2016, February 17). Early Behavior Therapy Found to Aid Children With A.D.H.D. New York Times. Retrieved February 19, 2016, from <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/18/health/early-behavior-therapy-found-to-aid-children-with-adhd.html?src=me>

had cameos!



**Seattle Mayor's Education Summit**

Seattle Mayor Ed Murray will be hosting an Education Summit on April 30. [Learn more!](#)



*This Month's Health Education Topic*

## Addressing Anxiety in a School-Based Setting

Of the students seen in King County school-based health centers for mental health services, anxiety is one of the most common diagnoses. Beyond the students that we serve directly though, there are many more students that face anxiety--chronically or situationally--that we don't see.

Most of us could probably rattle off the [symptoms of anxiety](#):

- Headaches,
- Nausea,
- Difficulty concentrating, and
- Anger, among many other symptoms.



Most of us have probably felt those symptoms ourselves. But young people may struggle with recognizing and managing these feelings and overcoming them. You don't have to be a mental health provider to help students learn skills to cope with these feelings. Especially as testing season begins and some of our older students start to plan for life after high school, we have a great opportunity to build our own skills for outreach to these students.

What you can do:

- **Build Your Referral Networks:** In addition to reminding students of your presence and resources during this time of year, remind teachers and other building staff as well. Encourage your colleagues to recognize signs of anxiety in students and refer them to resources within the building and in the community.
- **Get a Refresher on Resources Available at Your School:** If a student struggles with chronic anxiety, do they have the needed accommodations to be successful? As highlighted in the Good News section above, our SBHCs have access to more information now about how students are doing academically. As Institutional Partners, mental health providers now have more flexibility to collaborate with other student services in their building to better support students. Do you know what [resources](#) are available at your school?
- **Work with Each Student on the Basics:** Incorporate messages into your clinics (posters, [bulletin board](#), etc.) and into your visits reminding students about the importance of sleep, healthy eating, and exercise. Especially for students with situational anxiety (like test anxiety), focusing on keeping a healthy baseline can help keep anxiety to a minimum.
- **Host Support Groups:** If you already host student groups, plan a meeting to teach [relaxation techniques](#) and other [coping skills](#). If you don't host student groups, have you thought about starting one?

As we launch into the last half of the year, reevaluate the resources available to you and your students to address anxiety. What resources have been the most helpful to you?

*What health education topics or resources are of interest to you? Let us know! Send ideas and suggestions to [kaetlin.miller@kingcounty.gov](mailto:kaetlin.miller@kingcounty.gov) and check out our [Health Education Resource Library](#).*

## Events and Grant Opportunities

### Trainings & Professional Development



#### SBHC Provider Trainings

- **March 2 from 7:30 to 9 a.m.** - HIV/PrEP Updates with Kathry Brown, MD (Group Health HIV Program Chief), Byron Doecker, MD (Group Health Family Medicine Resident), and Susan Mitchell, ARNP (Group Health PrEP Program Manager) ([2100 Building](#))
- **March 23 from 1-4 p.m.** - Anxiety & OCD with Dr. Kristy Ludwig (University of Washington) ([2100 Building](#))

#### Other Opportunities

- **March 8 at 9:30 a.m.** - The Anchors of Emotional Intelligence in the RULER Approach. Register [here](#). [SPS Early Learning training]
- **March 15 at 9:30** - Cultural Competency & Responsiveness. Register [here](#). [School's Out Washington training]
- **March 10 at 11 a.m.** - Webinar: Trauma and Homeless Youth. Register [here](#). [School-Based Health Alliance training]
- **March 22 at 10 a.m.** - Continuous Improvement Using Data. Register [here](#). [SPS School & Community Partnerships, City of Seattle, and YDEKC training]

Please send any articles, ideas or comments to Kaetlin at [kaetlin.miller@kingcounty.gov](mailto:kaetlin.miller@kingcounty.gov).

**Sincerely,**

Your School Health Team,  
Sara, Kaetlin, Sarah, and Jessica